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D.H.S. Gives Back To School Cash

Children receiving cash assistance through the Department of Human Services will get an extra \$79 to help pay for back-to-school costs this September and the department will invest millions in child abuse prevention pilots, DHS Director Ismael Ahmed announced on Thursday during the kickoff of the "Helping Families 101: Get Ready 2 Learn" campaign.

More details are expected in the coming weeks, but this week Mr. Ahmed said DHS will spend \$6.6 million on the increased efforts, including by conducting child abuse and prevention pilot programs that will seek to keep children with their families. Those pilots will be in Dearborn, Detroit, Flint, Grand Rapids and Pontiac.

The back-to-school stipend is used in some years and not others, said Mr. Ahmed, but the department decided the poor economy and availability of funds demanded that children be given more money this year.

"It's an important resource that boosts the child's self-esteem and helps meet the family's needs, so the children can reach their full potential," he said.

Mr. Ahmed stressed that the average family receiving cash assistance through the Family Independence Program is made up of a single, working parent who has two children and makes little more than minimum wage, or about \$800 a month, working at a full time job. The maximum a person can make is 50 percent of the federal poverty guideline to qualify for FIP.

He said this time of year parents are more focused on children's issues and seeking out the services available to help them parent, making it the perfect month to launch the "Helping Families 101" campaign. That effort will combine department and community partner resources to educate families on child abuse and prevention, child support, early childhood education and other issues important to child well being.

For more information, visit the department's back to school preparation [website](#).